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237 292 302 [415] and tied with woollen-yarn on to a small stick or cane splinter (fig. 48), for sticking into the fillet of the frontlet. The Indians take very great care of their feather ornaments, and the easily damaged ostrich plumes (see front-page plate and fig. 49) are kept encased in bamboo. The plume-case reproduced in fig. 50 consists of a piece of bamboo, 50 cm long and 2.5 cm wide. At the upper joint there is a hole, 3.2 cm long and 1.2 cm wide, through which the partition wall has been removed. The bamboo chip cut out in making the hole near the bottom end, is tied over the hole with a thin strip of bast; whereas the upper hole is without such a lid. The lower hole differs from the upper, in that its edges, as well as the edges of the lid, are painted red. I presume that neither of these holes has been made exclusively for the purpose of facilitating the removal of the wall within the joints, but that they have also served to make easier the taking out of the feathers from the case. The painting red of the holes and lid edges has, as I shall show further on, probably been done with magic intent, for the safeguarding of the plumes.

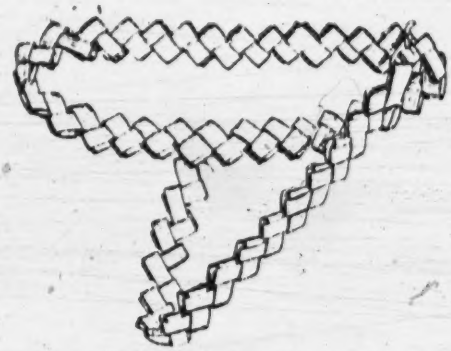

Fig. 44. Frontlet of palm leaf, with chin strap. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/3. Rikom. 03. 3. 14.

Fig. 45. »State» frontlet, made of white and pink feathers and down from the pink »spoonbill». Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/3. Rikom. 03. 3. 13.

The curious object seen in fig. 51 is, it has been stated, meant to be used as an ornament at dances; it is made out of the leaf of a fan palm (Copernicia australis). It seems to me,

sticks, in the holes that have been made, in order to keep them from closing up. After the healing of the wound, these plugs are, however taken out, and it is only when the boys have reached the age of puberty, that the ear-lobe is gradually distended by means of plugging with a succession of ear blocks, or ear-lobe discs, of increasing sizes. Only youths of mature age, and men, are allowed to take part in certain religious dances. At the performance of these, it is of especial importance to be protected from evil spirits. According to the belief of the Indians, ear discs afford them such protection,[1] and it is therefore possible that this is the reason why the boys begin wearing ear discs only after having attained puberty. For reasons which I shall explain below, I consider that the *piercing of the ear-lobes by no means always implies wearing of ear-lobe discs*. Among the Choroti, the ears of little girls are often pierced in the same way as in the case of the boys[2] (see the woman with pierced ear-lobes in fig. 22), *but never once did I see a Choroti woman wearing discs in her ears*, nor is there in the literature on these Indians any photographic evidence to be found, as far as I know, of Choroti women wearing ear discs. Further; neither Baron Erland Nordenskiöld,[3] nor Doctor Rafael Karsten, both explorers who have lived for a long time among the Choroti, are now able to recollect with any certainty having seen any Choroti woman wearing ear discs.

To cause bleeding by perforating the skin, has among the Chorotis, as among other tribes in the Chaco — a magic significance, and the possession of many scars is considered a great advantage. Thus, for instance, the Chaco Indians will with ostentation and satisfaction show even scars from bites of the palometa fish. When the Choroti believe themselves possessed by some evil spirit, they prick themselves with sharp-pointed bone awls, and imagine that the spirit leaves the body with the outflowing blood. About this custom, Karsten writes: 'If the arm fails or trembles in pulling the bow, its weakness is, according to the belief of the Chorotis, due to the presence of a mohsek in the blood and they think that the evil demon will leave the body with the blood drawn. The scars left by the cuts are kept up with care and shown with satisfaction,

[1] Karsten (4), p. 124, and Grubb (1), p. 72.

[2] Nordenskiöld observed in a Choroti village that *all* the girls had their ears pierced. According to a letter of his, dated 13 May, 1921. Rockefeller collection of manuscripts, volume 1921, letter N.

[3] According to letter referred to in footnote 2.

5†. — *v. Rosen.* II.

9 L should be Chorroti. - Analyst

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almost with pride. *Evidently it is thought that the very scars afterwards act as a sort of charm against the spirits.*»[1]

If scars left by wounds are considered to possess desirable, magical properties, it would easily be supposed that perforations that have been kept open must possess the same properties in a greatly enhanced degree. Among the Chiriguano, neighbours of the Choroti, the actual piercing of the lower lip constituted the most important of the ceremonial acts performed on the boys on their having attained puberty, and among the Chané — whose culture is akin to that of the Chiriguano — not only was the lower lip pierced on this occasion, but the boys were also given other wounds on the body.[2]

Co 881 304 171

Ci 304 789

From what I have adduced above, it will therefore be seen that, according to the belief of the Indians, *the making of punctures or perforations on the body, has in itself magic effects, and, consequently, that these magic effects are not believed to arise with the fixing of some ornamental object of magical character — e. g., a tembeta, or an ear disc — into the perforation.*

Ci 304 789 562

This being so, here, in my opinion, lies the explanation of the fact that Choroti girls sometimes have pierced ear-lobes, although it has never *with certainty* been shown that they ever wear ear discs. On the other hand, from reasons I shall present below, it is *probable* that old Choroti women, with distended ear-lobes, *exceptionally* do wear ear discs.

I myself, as well as other investigators of the Chaco peoples, have seen elderly women among the Choroti with holes in their ears so large that one was forced to suppose that the lobes had been stretched in some way or other. Such stretching, however, may not *necessarily* be due to the wearing of ear blocks, but *may* have been produced by manual manipulation. That, by such means, perfectly monstrous distension of the soft parts of the body can very well be brought about, is proved by, among other things, the practice of the Hottentot women of lengthening out — merely by frequent pulling — the labia minora into an enormous size.[3] A similar stretching of the hole in the ear-lobe might, from the Indians' point of view, have for its object the increasing, proportionately to its size, the magic properties of the hole. Among the Incas, the size

[1] Karsten (4), p. 157. Italics by von Rosen.
[2] Karsten (4), p. 200.
[3] von Luschan (1), p. 378.

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of the hole in the ear-lobe was probably an important matter, a point noticed also by Karsten, who writes on this subject: »Of all marks of honour which they received at this initiation, *the holes* in the ear-lobes were the most important. The Inca himself pierced the ears of the young princes with big golden pins, which afterwards were left in the wounds *in order to make the holes larger.*»[1]

For reasons which here follow, I can, however, quite well imagine that exceptions might be made from the rule that ear discs may not be worn by women. Karsten states his observation that women, as a rule, take no part in religious ceremonies, incantations or dances, but adds: »There are exceptions to this rule, and just as elderly women, who have been properly initiated, may perform certain religious ceremonies of their own, so may they also occasionally take an active part in certain religious dances.»[2]

Bearing in mind the fact that ornaments of magical character have their specific uses at dances and other religious ceremonies, and also that ear blocks, as we have seen, are looked upon by the Choroti Indians as means of protection against evil spirits, I do not find it improbable that *elderly women, who have been initiated in magic ritual, on certain occasions may wish to strengthen their power to resist evil spirits by enlarging, as do the men, the holes in their ear lobes by putting in blocks, or discs.*[3]

Among another Chaco tribe, the Toba Takshik, Dr Lehmann-Nitsche has observed that a certain distinctive attribute, which as a rule is exclusively meant for the one sex, may, in rare and exceptional cases, be assumed by the other. Lehmann-Nitsche tells of a man who had been given the tattooing especially distinguishing women, but points out that this must have been an extremely rare case, seeing that it greatly astonished even the interpreter, and suggests the possibility of the man not being considered an »homme normal».[4] It is noteworthy that the tattooing in question, described and reproduced by Lehmann-Nitsche, is practically identical with a tattooing design that adorned a Choroti *man* (see fig. 66).

[1] Karsten (4), p. 136. Italics by von Rosen.

[2] Karsten (1), p. 2.

[3] Fig. 30 in »Indianlif» (Nordenskiöld (13) shows a redoubtable old Choroti woman, who had executed the tattooing Nordenskiöld had done on himself. This old woman's ear-lobes are enormously distended.

[4] Lehmann-Nitsche (2), pp. 15 and 16.

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These casings are not sewn together, but consist of the seamless skin of the tail or leg of some animal. At first I took it as a matter of course that these casings had been put on solely for the purpose of strengthening the bow at some point where it looked like breaking. In order to make certain, I cut loose a casing of this kind, which was on the bow numbered 03. 3. 253, but I could not discover the least crack, knot, or other defect pointing to any necessity for reinforcing the bow at that point. But, between the casing and the stave, I did find some flattened cakes of excrement from some herbivorous animal. Whether these excrements had *purposely* been placed inside the casing, is of course impossible to say, but if they were put there on purpose, then they undoubtedly possessed some magical significance. In such case the idea must have been that they would bring good luck in the hunting of the species of game whose excrement had been placed inside the casing (see p. 181). As among the Indians there is a very wide-spread notion that whoever possesses the skin of some animal also possesses a certain mastery over the spirit of that animal,[1] it is not impossible that the skin casing itself is of a magic character. Professor Emil Holmgren, who, at my request, kindly carried out a microscopical examination of the excrement flakes as well as of the piece of skin, considers that the character of the latter points to its having been a part of the tail of an animal of the goat, sheep, or *cat* tribe, and that the colour and grouping of the hairs are indicative of the *last-mentioned* category.[2] That parts of animals' bodies are used by the Chaco Indians as hunting amulets, is, among other things, evident from a statement by Nordenskiöld upon the subject of hunting among the Ashluslay, who are neighbours of the Choroti: »In hunting, the Ashluslay make use of various amulets. If, in the always indispensable caraguatá bag, one carries the head of a tortoise, then one is able to stalk close up to the deer, without putting them to flight. When hunting ostriches, it is a good thing to bring along pieces of skin taken from the breast of ostriches which one has killed.«[3] As to the other two bows, I have refrained from cutting off the skin casings, and therefore cannot say whether the latter conceal any cracks or not. On the staves of the bows Nos. 03. 3. 252 there are, however, to be seen, close to the casing, several deep scorings, running

[1] Karsten (6), p. 90.
[2] Opinion dated August 24th, 1921. Rockefeller collection of Manuscripts, Volume 1921, »H».
[3] Nordenskiöld (13), p. 49.

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534 and Yuracáre. Outside the Chaco, and the regions bordering on it, this type of whistle has not, so far, been found.[1] It is noteworthy that, generally speaking, these whistles have been given a similar, very characteristic, ornamentation. It is only such whistles as originate from the Yuracáre that form an exception from this rule.[2] The ornamentation, which is usually carved in the wood, in low relief, consists of a figure more or less [531] resembling a cogwheel, with a wheel-cross in its centre (fig. 166). Such whistles as have a tin mounting are sometimes without the wheel-cross (see fig. 165).

●789 534 531 301 This ornamentation is probably of some magical significance.[3] For the fact is that these disc-shaped whistles are not only a combination of ornament and musical instrument, but they are also put to magical use. Karsten relates that the Choroti Indians, whilst performing their exorcismal dances, now and then blow their disc-shaped whistles to scare off evil spirits.[4]

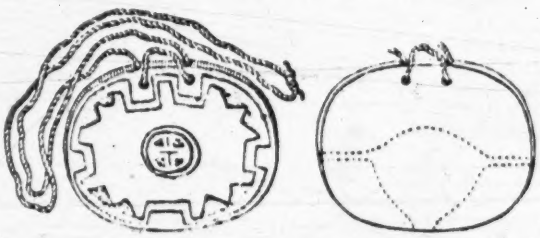

Fig. 166. Disc-shaped, wooden whistle, one side with carved ornaments, the other side plain. Used like the whistle in fig. 165. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. ⅓ n. Gothenburg Museum. D. 703. From Nordenskiöld (11), fig. 56.

In a monograph on whistles I have endeavoured to show that the practice of carrying ornamental whistles is of remote antiquity in America, and I think I have adduced very strong evidence of the so called »mesh-spacers» of antler or polished stone, that have been found in graves in North America, being, as a matter of fact, used as ornamental whistles, and possibly of a magical character.[5]

534 The disc-shaped Choroti whistles are blown at the lower aperture (see figs. 165 and 166), and with the same technique in blowing as described in connexion with the description of the flute in fig. 162. By the closing

[1] Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 188 and 189.

[2] Nordenskiöld (11), p. 188.

[3] Of the wheel-cross having been, and still being, also in America the characteristic symbol of the sun, we possess reliable proof. See e. g. Frobenius (1), fig. 398. Cf. also d'Alviella (1), pp. 76 and 77; and Holmes (1), plate XXXVIII.

[4] Karsten (1), pp. 34 and 35.

[5] von Rosen (8), p. 114 et seq. and Gustaver (1).

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I never heard the Choroti sing or play any real melody; as I have already pointed out, the musical sense of these Indians appears to be exceedingly rudimentary. But when they are beating their magic drums (fig. 167), or using their magic rattles (fig. 170), one perceives that they are by no means lacking in a sense of rythm.

533

Fig. 168. Drumstick, of wood, with a small tinplate mounting. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 394.

The drums as well as the rattles are of a magical character; both are principally used at incantations and magic dances.

The magic drum consists of an earthenware vessel which is partly filled with water, and covered over with a piece of skin. The skin is tied round the mouth of the vessel with a string of caraguata (fig. 167). A single drumstick is always used. Drumsticks are of wood, and usually carved; sometimes they have metal mountings (figs. 168 and 169). When the drum is to be used, it is usually stood on a ring of straw which is placed on the ground.

Drums consisting of clay pots with skin stretched over them have also been in use in North America. According to some early authors, such drums were not beaten with the bare hand, but with a drumstick: thus they were in this respect handled in the same manner as by the Choroti.[1] As to whether the North American drums were also partly filled with water, I am not able to say, as in the literature I have found no information on that point.

In a previous work I have endeavoured to show that, among the Choroti, water was put into the drums for the purpose of tuning them to the pitch that was wanted.[2] This detail of information, which I had from the Choroti themselves, is in all probability correct. Karsten, however, offers a different explanation. He is of opinion that the water is poured into the clay-pot drums exclusively for reasons

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[789]

Fig. 169. Drumstick, of wood with ring shaped tin mountings. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/2. Riksm. 03. 3. 398.

[1] See for example Holmes (1), p. 34 and fig. 4.
[2] von Rosen (2), p. 12.

535 centres on them. It is for them that they paint and deck themselves out.
302 At these balls the young Indian tries to appear as elegantly apparelled, as originally painted and decorated, as possible. Each day he paints himself after a different fashion, and arranges his ornaments differently. — These gentry, upon growing into older, staid, married men, no longer adorn themselves for ball parties, but only for war. — As to the Choroti girls, I have often seen them anointing their bodies with fish oil, which imparts to them an unpleasant smell. Their own opinion on this point is
[832] no doubt a very different one. To their thinking, we Europeans have an offensive cow smell. The level of elegance affected by the men is never
535 attained by the women. Still, they are, however, able to make the consoling reflection that it is, anyhow, in the first place for their sake that the lords of creation spend several hours of the day on their toilet.

»As has been said, it is in dancing that the whole interest of the young men and the young women centres. When the sun has set, then it begins. In a circle, or in a single rank, the men dance, marking the time by singing, may be: 'Tae-a-sa-lé, tae-a-sa-lé'. As the rhythm of the singing is slow or quick, so is the dancing. Music is a thing unknown at these
[533] dances. The chants that are sung are untranslateable refrains, which often are international, i. e., are used by many different tribes. The girls dance behind the men. Among the Choroti Indians it is the girl who takes the
[832] initiative in the matter of amatory ventures. She simply carries off with her, from the ball, any particular young man whom she may want as her lover for the night. These dances made a grand spectacle, as the moon, or a bonfire of pampas grass, shone on the gleaming bodies. I have seen as many as a hundred men form a dancing circle. At times the dance went quite slowly; at times it would go at a breakneck speed, raising clouds of dust, so that all one could see was a whirling melee of bodies and waving ostrich plumes.«

335 Of the dances of the Chaco Indians,[1] those that are obviously magical
789 are mainly performed as ceremonies of exorcism against dreaded spirits who have it in their power to cause illness or death; according to Karsten, magic dances are also resorted to in order to enhance the supply of wild, edible fruits.[2]

[1] Extract from Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 73, 75—77, and 79.
[2] Karsten (1).
[3] Karsten (1), pp. 25–28.

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again until a player has taken all his adversary's »sheep«, when it remains for him to try and takes his arrow too. In this he succeeds if he can make a throw which lands him in the hole where his opponent's arrow happens to be. If he does that after having taken all his opponent's »sheep«, then he has won the game.[1]

The Choroti are enthusiastic chuke players, and as a rule play for stakes. On this game they can stake snail-shell necklaces, woollen mantles and other things, often representing considerable values to the Indians. According to Karsten, the chuke game may also be played for purposes of magic. It is mostly played when there is a dearth of food, for the Indians believe that they are able to make the wild fruit grow in larger quantities by assiduously playing chuke.[2]

Playing with a ball is a much favoured pastime. A ball game resembling hockey is played among the Choroti and several other Chaco tribes. The players divide themselves into two teams, each having its goal to defend. The distance between the goals depends on whether grown-ups or children are going to play, the distance being greater in the case of the former. Each goal is marked by branches stuck into the ground. A wooden ball is thrown into the centre between the goals by an Indian who is not taking part in the match. By means of »hockey« sticks consisting of the leaf-stalks of a palm, grown with a natural bend (fig. 174), or of tree branches, the players then try to drive the ball so that it rolls into the goal that their opponents are defending (fig. 177). As will be seen, this game is played on the same principle as our hockey, by attacking and defending. It was a great pleasure to watch Choroti boys playing hockey, in which their native lissomness was exhibited.

I also saw Choroti children play at ball. Their hand-balls consisted of dry maize leaves tied together in the way seen in fig. 175. They have the appearance of old-time flaming hand grenades, and, whichever way they are thrown, they always fly »ball« foremost and the »fiery tail« pointing backwards or upwards.

The Choroti boys make themselves both long bows and pellet-bows with which they shoot at a mark, or use in play in other ways; they also amuse themselves with a kind of light, two-cord bolas[3] and with little

[1] Cf. Nordenskiöld (11), pp. 163–164, and Karsten (5), pp. 100–102.
[2] Karsten (5), p. 102.
[3] Nordenskiöld (13), fig. 24.

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Steinen,[1] Koch-Grünberg[2] and Karsten[3] have made specially thorough research into questions connected with this matter.

From primitive peoples it is, however, exceedingly difficult to obtain thoroughly reliable information. In order to get rid of a tiresome questioner, a negro, or an Indian, will often reply in the way he thinks most pleasing to his interrogator. Information received by means of an interpreter, is not unfrequently unreliable. This explains how statements which are absolutely erroneous have found their way into the works of even the most painstaking ethnographers. Another pitfall consists in drawing hasty conclusions based on analogies. There is this to be remembered; that primitive peoples' process of thinking sometimes runs along lines which deviate entirely from those of civilized man, for which reason conditions which, to us, appear analogous may, to the primitive mind, not necessarily appear as being in any way connected.

Although it has not yet been conclusively proved that all Choroti ornaments are of a magic character, it is nevertheless not improbable that such is the case. About many of the ornamental objects of the Choroti there are thoroughly trustworthy proofs as to their magic character. When from two or more members of a tribe circumstantial and practically identical, accounts of the magic properties of some ornamental object have been obtained, there can, of course, be no hesitation in accepting that the object in question is, by the Indians, regarded as a kind of amulet.

Among the finest of Choroti ornaments possessing a magic character I am inclined to class the frontlets and hair-nets of red woollen fabric (figs. 44, 46 and 47) that the Choroti use on occasions of especial importance. Several Choroti stated to me that these full-dress articles of apparel were worn not only as ornaments, but also as charms against evil spirits, and the same belief prevails among the Lengua as regards *their* ornaments of a corresponding kind (see fig. 42).[4]

That the Choroti regard their ear-lobe discs (see figs. 53—55) as possessing magic properties, I have already stated in connexion with my account of the character of those ornaments (pp. 62—66).

[1] E. g., von den Steinen (2).
[2] E. g., Koch-Grünberg (3).
[3] Karsten (4).
[4] Grubb (1), pp. 70 and 71.

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as a rule a practical one, although the articles might, *apart from that,* be of magic use. In the same way many of our Northern ornamental objects might be attributed with a magical character, although my belief is that, e. g., the »heirloom» silver ornaments of our peasantry were more appreciated because of their decorativeness than for any supposed magic properties of theirs. Naturally, also among us there were then ornaments (e. g., Tor's hammers) whose supernatural-, was more obvious than their decorative, character, and such cases may be considered as typical amulets.

These points of view I also consider applicable when reviewing the ornaments of the Choroti.

For it appears to me that, in the case of the Choroti, a differentiation can be made between typical amulets and ornaments to which magic properties are ascribed.

Objects of the latter kind are always worn in full view; they are usually carefully made or worked, and have, as a rule, a decorative, often startlingly showy, appearance. If one asks a Choroti why he is wearing such an ornament, the answer which one as a rule obtains is merely that it looks well, or that it is useful to wear. Occasionally one may get the reply that the ornament is of use against evil spirits, but in such cases it is my firm opinion that, to the Indians, the object's magic character is of less consequence than its being pretty or making a pompous show.

Such objects as I should like to call typical amulets are exclusively, or mainly, of a magic character. Amulets of this kind are often, although not always, entirely devoid of all pretence to beauty. They not infrequently consist of unworked objects, from nature, such as claws of animals, head-carapaces of armadillos, bits of skin, tufts of hair, and other things. They are often worn so as to be out of sight, say in a bag, or under the clothes. Figs. 183 and 184 represent typical specimens of this kind of amulet. To distinguish between these two groups of objects *only from their appearance*, is, however, quite impossible. It must be remembered that claws, teeth, etc., are capable of being put together and arranged into ornaments which are very attractive from an esthetic point of view, but as the supposed magic power of the claws and teeth ought rather to increase than decrease by being placed in contiguity, ornaments that have been composed in this way would constitute implements in which the magic qualities were valued by their owners far more than the esthetic

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301 789 That in primitive man there is an instinct for self-ornamentation, I consider cannot be doubted. In children this instinct is found, and it is possibly also traceable among animals.[1]

[224]

Fig. 183. Hunting amulet. A jaguar or puma claw. Choroti, Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/1. Riksm. 03. 3. 399.

Fig. 184. Hunting amulet. The carapace of an armadillo's head. Choroti, Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/1. Riksm. 03. 3. 400.

000 According to my opinion, flowers and snail shells were certainly used as ornaments by our race long before the dawn of such mental development as made possible the idea of supernatural things. Prior to this, no »magic» properties of any kind were, of course, ascribable to natural objects. The faculty of sensing beauty in a material form is bound to be

[1] Apes and monkeys, in captivity, are sometimes said to try decorating themselves with necklaces, hats, etc. This may, however, result only from a desire to imitate. More remarkable, it seems to me, is that elephants, camels, horses and dogs are said to show evident satisfaction when gaily decked out.

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of older origin that conception of things supernatural, wherefore it follows 000
that purely decorative art must be older that magic art.

In the course of time, ornaments have, from a variety of reasons, become attributed with magical properties, *without having, on that account, necessarily lost their character of being ornaments.*[1] At a still later stage it happens that the supernatural properties that once were ascribed to the objects are considered unimportant, and therefore by degrees fall into oblivion. Probably the Choroti will soon arrive at this stage of development in respect of their ornamental objects, and thus Karsten has rendered a very important service to science by having »fixed», so to speak, this stage of the evolution of Choroti culture, even if he, as is my opinion, at times overshoots the mark by giving undue prominence to the magic side of the question.

Singing, dancing, drum-beating and rattle-shaking are by the Choroti 789
regarded as potent in incantation and exorcism. This is a well known 533
fact, to which I have also referred on pp. 182, 183 in my account of a funeral dance which took place in a Choroti village.[2] That blowing a kind of disc shaped whistle is done for the purpose of driving away evil spirits I have already mentioned (p. 144). As regards the supposed magical character of a game of chance called »chuke», I also beg to refer to what I have said in the foregoing (see p. 155).

A popular belief, which is to be met with practically all over the world, 826
is that the mental and physical force in man is in some supernatural way centred in the hair of his head. As an instance of this, Karsten refers back to the well known legend about Samson, the hero who lost his strength as soon as Delilah had shorn him of his hair. Among us Northeners, as among other European peoples, the belief has also existed

[1] It is, inter alia, from Stolpe's works — e. g. Stolpe (1) — a well known fact that these cmingly purely geometrical ornaments of primitive peoples often can be traced to symbolic pictography. But symbolic pictures may, in their turn, have been developed out of geometrical designs. »Von den Steinen is now of opinion that a whole group of so called geometrical ornaments have evolved from textile designs, but that they, in being transposed from plaited or woven work to other materials, and carried out in engraving or painting, then embarked upon an independent existence, finally carrying with them a whole series of the most varied pictorial ideas, according to the requirements of the artist's inspiration, and that these latter creations had no essential connexion with the original geometrical designs.» The passage within the quotation marks is a summary made by Seler of von den Steinen's opinion as regards certain ornaments. Seler (1), p. 48.

[2] Cf. also Karsten (4), p. 152 (1), pp. 14, 33 and 34 (2), bottom picture in plate following p. 32, and Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 89—91, and 105.

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way, *and by renewed research among the Indians*, that we shall be enabled to obtain a thorough knowledge of their conception of magic blood-letting by means of awls.

In the foregoing I have mentioned that Choroti bow-staves are sometimes provided with a small skin casing, slipped on, and that on opening one of these casings I found that it contained excrements from some herbivorous animal. It is of course impossible to tell with certainty what the motive was for putting on this skin casing (see pp. 88 and 89), but I think it probable that it was put on the bow for some magic reason. It is noteworthy that it contained excrement. The fact of this being so is a circumstance that, in my opinion, especially points to the casing being of a magical character, for, according to the Chaco Indians' way of thinking, certain excrements possess magic properties and are often made use of in casting spells.[1]

All kinds of illnesses are by the Choroti considered to be caused by evil spirits. As yet, however, we know but little of these Indians' conception of the character and curing of different illnesses. Once Nordenskiöld called in medical aid from a medicine man among the Choroti, and this is how he describes the way in which the medicine man set about it:

'On many occasions, in the villages, I have seen the medicine men practising their profession. One day, among the Choroti, when I was feeling a bit seedy, I called one of those gentry to my camp. Giving out that I had a severe pain in the lower part of my chest, I asked him if he cared to cure me. He promised to come to me in the evening. At nightfall he arrived, accompanied by a colleague. They insisted on being left alone with me. Moberg and Andersson were consequently turned out, and sentries were posted so as to prevent anyone unauthorized gaining access to the hut. For a start, they made me strip to the skin, and then lie down. They stroked me with their hands over the chest, the sides of my body and the stomach, and then they spat on me. After that, they set to blowing on me, and then they laid themselves down and sucked hard at my chest, in particular at the spot where I had complained of the pain. After having sucked for a while, they turned away and pretended to vomit. Whatever they vomited up in this way, they did not show me, but, as they squeezed it between their fingers, it looked as if they had been squeezing worms. This performance lasted, I think, the

[1] See, for example, Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 93 and 98.

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Choroti Indians outside their house.

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The open space in the middle of the Choroti village, with a drum placed to the left.

The woman in the middle has a leather strap tied round the chest as a sort of charm against evil spirits.

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and ornaments, wearing many-coloured mantles, necklaces, ear-tubes, big ostrich plumes on the head, and having the face painted. The men form a circle round the girls with arms interlaced round each others' waists. The dance chiefly consists in jumping with both feet at once and stamping hard upon the ground to the measure of a very noisy but monotonous chant. The ceremony is called *nissammaha aséhne*, »to hurry on the girls». The expression »to hurry on» (*nissammaha*), as we shall find later, is used by the Chaco Indians in many cases where there is a question of magically influencing the course of nature for good and useful ends. Just as the Indians believe they can hurry on or promote the growth of the fruit by influencing the tree spirits and by exorcising the evil demons who are trying to blight them, so they »hurry on» the girls in the sense that by the dancing and chanting the latter are prompted to make a definitive choice of a husband, whereas at the same time evil spirits are kept away from them. Courtship and marriage, it should be noted, are of those numerous critical occasions in human life when malignant supernatural powers are believed to be more than otherwise on the alert to do harm and spoil the good designs of men, and as usual the weaker sex is supposed to be particularly exposed to them. The courting dance *Avúshe* is thus in part held with the intention of keeping off this invisible molestation, so that the girl's choice of a consort for life may take place under good auspices.

A man who is not taken away from the dance by a girl has no possibility of getting either a temporary paramour or a wife. The matter wholly depends on the girls, and there are of course always men who for one reason or another are despised. I sometimes noticed such unfortunate lovers at the Choroti dances. Their experience had led them not to take part in the dances; they were sitting in a hut close by, eagerly shaking the rattle gourd (*pelíte*), as they said, »to hurry on the girls» and thus possibly to have better luck in the future. Since the women are much fewer in number than the men, it is necessary that some men are obliged to remain bachelors all their lives. These men were ridiculed not only by the women but also by their more fortunate brethren. On the other hand, there are no unmarried women, and even widows soon remarry unless they are very old.

The men may try to attract the girls at the dances by their beautiful ostrich plumes, necklaces, and other ornaments, but these means of attraction certainly only play a subordinate part. The Choroti woman evidently expects something more of a man whom she thinks of marrying

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process and the other procreative functions of the woman is realized. The attainment of puberty therefore for the Indian girl certainly means the beginning of her sexual life, but at the same time it means her entrance into a very critical epoch of development, during which she is often — especially at child-birth and during the following menses — exposed to supernatural dangers. Hence the initiation ceremonies at puberty have for their object partly her direct protection against these dangers for the time being, partly her purification once for all from the evils associated with her sexual functions during the years to come or — to express it more plainly — to *harden* her against evil spirits. From this point of view we have to regard all puberty ceremonies of the Indians, even such practices as painting, scarification, and tattooing of the body or face, often undertaken with girls on the attainment of puberty.

In the dances and conjurations performed in honour of girls at puberty it is the women who, contrary to what is generally the rule in religious ceremonies, play the most prominent part. Among the *Choroti* the puberty of girls is celebrated with a magical dance called *Káusima* after the instrument which the women use for it; the instrument is called *káhuis*. The *káhuis* is a dancing-staff, two or three meters in length, made of a light kind of wood or bamboo, which has a bunch of deer's hoofs tied at the top. These rattles produce a hollow sound when the staff is struck on the ground and are supposed to possess a mysterious power to influence the spirits. This power of course must be explained from the fact that to the Choroti the deer is a demoniacal animal. The *káhuis* staff is the only magical instrument used by the Choroti women and it is never handled by the men.

The dance begins at the first new moon after the appearance of the signs of puberty, because the moon is believed to cause and have great influence upon the menstruation of women. It is performed every day until the following new moon, sometimes even still longer. At a *Káusima* dance which I witnessed the arrangement was as follows. The mother of the girl and some other elderly women formed a circle, or rather an elliptic ring, outside the hut where the girl was, each holding her rattling dancing-staff. Close to the ring four medicine-men were sitting at equal distances from one another, holding their rattle gourds (*pelite*). There were besides two more medicine-men standing up, each provided with a drum. During the dance the women moved round ceremoniously with slow, regular steps, chanting loudly and marking time with their rattle staffs which they struck on the ground. The men outside the ring also chanted, shaking

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their rattle gourds, whilst the men provided with drums beat them. The girl in whose honour the dance was held was standing motionless and silent at the entrance of the hut reclining against the wall and had to remain so during the whole ceremony. Sometimes, when towards evening she got tired and was on the point of falling asleep, one of the medicine-men came up to her and shook his rattle close to her face as if to keep her awake. The ceremony began in the afternoon and was continued with short pauses throughout the whole evening until midnight. I was informed that as long as the dance goes on the girl need not be veiled, but as soon as the conjuration is finished for the night she must have her face and her whole body well covered. During the whole period that the dance is performed she is moreover obliged to fast, avoiding fish and meat and living only on some light vegetable food.

I may add that all the men who took part in the ceremony were painted on the face in one way or another. Some of them simply had the face coated red with roucou or black with charcoal, whereas others had X-shaped or other patterns painted on the cheeks. The men's faces are always painted in this way at the conjurations of the Indians, and these paintings have a purely magical significance.

The drinking of algaroba beer also forms part of the magical practices at the feast, but it is strictly limited to the men.

The object of all these ceremonies is to protect the girl against the evil spirits, the *möhsek*, by which she is believed to be particularly attacked during her unclean condition. The spirits try to enter into her through the face — especially through those parts where there is a natural opening of the body, such as the eyes, the ears, the nose, and the mouth — and also through the ventral parts, the consequence being, if they succeed in doing so, that she will fall ill and die, or become supernaturally pregnant and give birth to a monster. It is in this way that the Indians account for the birth of those deformed children which they kill directly after birth. To prevent such frightful accidents the girl's head and body are covered after the conjuration is finished for the night. By means of the dancing, chanting, drumming, etc. the evil demons who take an interest in the girl and swarm about her are conjured and rendered harmless. According to the idea of the Indians she is not only protected for the time being against their attacks, but she will also retain a certain power of resistance against them in the future.

The puberty of a girl is not celebrated in all cases among the Choroti with so many ceremonies as in the case just described, but the

2. Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 S17 Mataco S17
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M 304 inflammation in the face the girl has to fast for some days after the operation.

M 304 751 Tattooing has a purely magical significance, as may be inferred from the fact that the Mataco and the Choroti women regard it particularly as a protection against disease. Analyzing the custom, we can distinguish at least three factors in it, all of which are associated with magical ideas: first, the scarification or bleeding itself; second, the matter (soot, ashes) rubbed into the wounds; and third, the patterns and marks incised which remain when the wounds have healed. Bleeding and scarification are common practices of purely magical significance among all Indians of South America, and as far as the Pilcomayo tribes are concerned I shall have occasion to mention this custom again in a later chapter. The very scars left after such operations are regarded as a protection against evil spirits. Further, that tattooing is done by means of ashes or soot is certainly not an accident. The use of ashes for superstitious purposes is of frequent occurrence among the Indians, the general idea being that ashes are a prophylactic against evil spirits. The custom of mixing ashes or soot with saliva is significant from the same point of view, for magical virtues are commonly ascribed to the saliva.

M [789] M [827]

C 304 751 789 All women among the Choroti are tattooed in the same way, that is, have the same marks and patterns applied to the face, and no full-grown woman lacks this tribal characteristic. Since tattooing is regarded as a permanent protection against evil spirits and sickness, it is natural that a woman lacking it should be shunned by the men, but it is not a means of attraction or a »decoration» in the common sense of the word.

T 304 184 [302] As to the *T o b a s*, tattooing or the custom of making indelible marks on the body or the face was formerly in vogue among all Toba tribes as among all peoples of the Guaycurú-group; but the Bolivian Tobas of the present day have dropped this custom, contenting themselves with simple body painting. Tattooing among the Tobas seems to have been limited to the female sex, as indeed is the rule among the Chaco tribes. According to d'Orbigny, the Toba girls were tattooed when they attained puberty and became marriageable. Since the custom is no longer practised by the Bolivian Tobas I have not seen how it is done by them. The procedure, however, is the same as among other Chaco tribes, incisions being made in the face and ashes rubbed into the wounds. As appears from the photographs of some Toba women which Dr. Lehmann-Nitsche took in Buenos Aires in 1899 the tattooing practised by the Toba women was exceedingly elaborate and complicated.

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there are several evidences of a nature animism, although as a general rule only such objects and phenomena as especially strike their imagination or with which some remarkable incidents are connected, are incidentally or permanently looked upon as being animated by spirits. There are evil demons in the sky, which among other things cause such strange phenomena as eclipses of the moon, of which the Choroti have the same idea as the Mataco and most other Chaco tribes. Other evil spirits of the sky cause drought, which in the Chaco forms the greatest obstacle to a successful cultivation of the fields. The demons keep the rain back, and the Indians in consequence try, during the dry season, to conjure them by drumming, shaking rattles and chanting so as to compel them to release rain. On the other hand, there are demons operating in the violent thunderstorms, although these are generally accompanied by torrents of rain. The Choroti believe that thunder and the flash of lightning are caused by a great number of *mōhsek* who are rushing through the air and making an onset upon the village. These spirits are more often called *ahuéna*, »the birds», and thunder and lightning are therefore generally called by the Indians simply *ahuéna*, although the proper name in the Choroti language is *süntini*. Every time a burst of thunder is heard, the Indians, sitting in their huts, begin to shout and scream loudly, in order to frighten away the molesting supernatural visitors. There are evil spirits in the violent whirlwinds and sand-storms so common in the Chaco, as well as in the cold south wind, *niük*, which during the dry season sweeps over the plains and produces rheumatism and chills among the natives, badly equipped as they are against cold weather. The warm north wind again, *ükine*, is sent by »good» spirits. Thus the radical contrast between the cold south wind and the warm north wind, both of which are sent by supernatural agents, has been to the Choroti the main reason for making a distinction between two of the four cardinal points.

Spirits, *mōhsek*, are also believed to animate *trees* and *plants* — bad spirits poisonous and harmful plants, good spirits the beneficial and useful ones. The ideas which the Indians entertain about plant spirits and the customs to which they give rise, are substantially the same among all the tribes, and I shall presently give an account of them.

The Choroti also believe in *animal* demons. Thus they share the belief, held by all Indians in tropical and subtropical America, that a jaguar which attacks Indians or appears under unusual circumstances, is a »man-tiger» *i.e.* a man, generally a sorcerer, who has assumed the shape of this beast. Even in his lifetime a sorcerer may incidentally change

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Chapter XIV.

2. Other kinds of conjuration.

From what has been stated above of the social customs of the Chaco Indians, we realize that there is hardly any important event in the life of these natives which is not celebrated with religious or magical ceremonies of some kind. Generally these ceremonies are simple: drumming, the shaking of rattles, dancing and chanting form the main features in all of them. A few words may be said in this connection about the magical instruments, the *drum* and the *rattle*.

The drum, which is called *usyúk* by the Choroti, *huitsyúk* by the Mataco and *kaltaki* by the Tobas, is known to all Pilcomayo tribes, although it is nowadays little used by the Bolivian Tobas. It is a simple instrument, consisting of a small clay pot which is covered with a goat's or deer's skin. In beating the drum only one stick is used. Generally the pot is partly filled with water — a detail which I cannot exactly account for, since it has no perceptible influence upon the tone of the instrument. Probably the water is believed to eke out in some way its magical efficacy. The drum is the principal magical instrument of the Argentine Mataco who use the rattle gourd less, whereas, on the other hand the Choroti, who also use both instruments, seem to appreciate the rattle more. In a Mataco village the drum is at work nearly every day: sometimes the spirit of a dead Indian is frightened away with it, sometimes other evil spirits, disease-spirits, spirits of hurricanes, tempests, drought, etc. are conjured with it; sometimes the Indians try to influence the good spirits animating trees and plants with it, so as to effect an abundant harvest of algaroba and chañar. The Choroti again mainly use the drum during the algaroba season, when the instrument is beaten both day and night. In a Choroti village where I lived for several months, an Indian sorcerer was specially engaged for this important ceremony.

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The object of the drumming was to »hurry on» the ripening of the algaroba and the chañar fruits, and at the same time to frighten away the evil spirits of hurricanes and tempests which frequently blight these trees at the time when they are flowering. Drought is another great danger to a rich algaroba and chañar harvest. By means of drumming the demons, who cause drought by keeping rain back, are conjured. In some cases it seems as if the drumming Indian, by the very time in which he is beating his drum, were imitating the fall of the rain-drops. The Choroti drummer seldom wears the rattle-belt (*tahús*), which on the other hand seems to be regarded as indispensable by the Mataco drummer. The latter, when he is beating the drum, continually moves his body up and down and from one side to the other in order that the rattle which he wears round the waist may make a noise.

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The other of the two principal magical instruments of the Chaco Indians is the rattle gourd, called *poketá* by the Tobas, *votsotáh* by the Mataco, and *pelīte* by the Choroti. It consists of a round or oval bottle-gourd, hollowed out through a small opening in the tapering stem, and then filled with dry seeds, generally of tusca, small shells, beads, or other things producing a rattling sound. The outside is often ornamented with lines, triangles, squares, or other geometric designs. The instrument, when shaken, is believed to have a remarkable »power», which is partly due to the magical properties of the gourd itself, partly to the seeds or other things with which it is filled, partly to the geometric figures with which the outside of the gourd is ornamented. The instrument is used much on the same occasions and for the same purposes as the drum. I have stated, however, that the *Choroti* not only use the *pelīte* to frighten away or conjure evil spirits in general, but also for certain positive ends. To shake the rattle is in the Choroti language called *nekeālitse*; when it is shaken for a special purpose they use the expression *nekeālitse sīmā*, which means more or less: »to shake the rattle to obtain something». Thus I have mentioned that during the marriage and courtship dances such young men as are despised by the girls are in the habit of shaking their rattles in order to »hurry on» the latter and to have greater success in love. Similarly, when a young man goes out to find a bride in connection with the dances, his father at home continually shakes the rattle to »hurry on» the girls on behalf of his son and promote his important undertaking. There are many other instances of the same kind. When the Choroti women go out in the forest in the morning to collect algaroba beans for the brewing of the sacred beer or other wild

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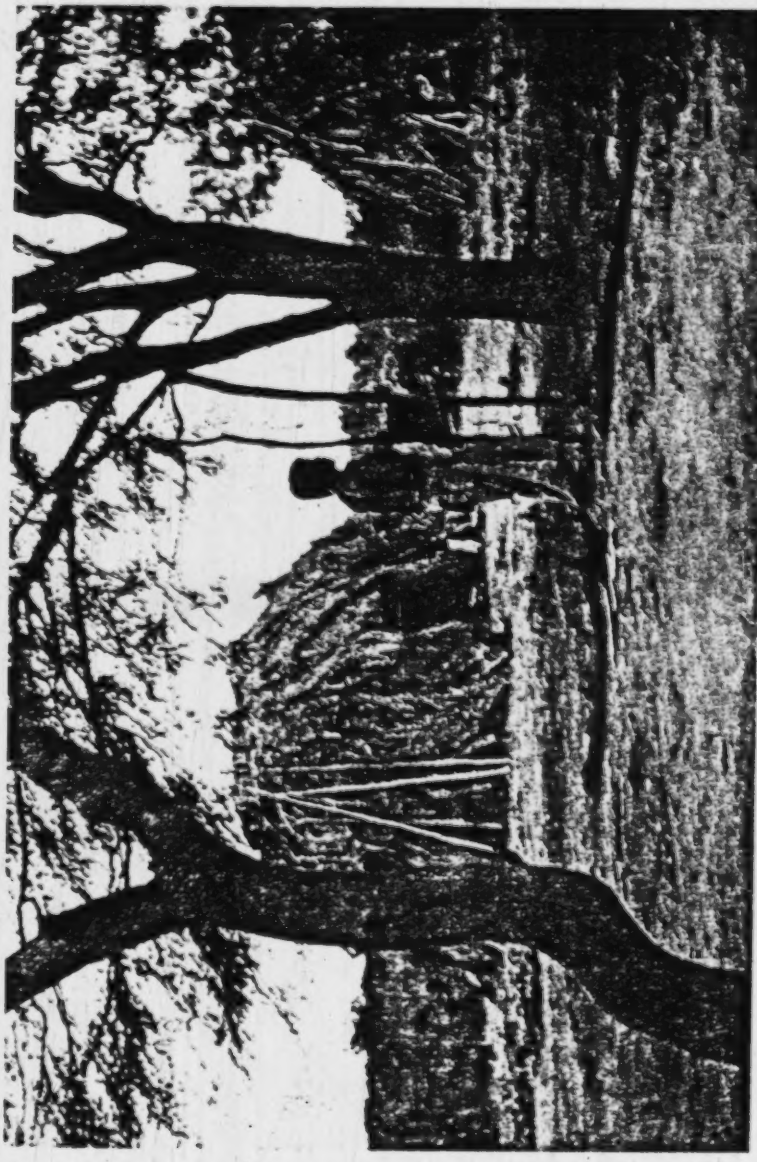

The ceremony *Kau'nagnik* among the Choroti. During the algaroba season the drum is beaten day and night with a view to shurrying one the ripening of the fruits.

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fruits, their husbands at home shake their rattles the whole day in the belief that the rattling will help them to find and to collect great quantities of the important fruit. »Very soon will the woman be back with much algaroba». In the same way good luck is secured for a fishing expedition. Whereas the younger men go out to the river with their nets, the old men stay at home and »hurry on» the fish on their behalf by vigorously shaking their rattles.

It is difficult to make out exactly the train of thought underlying this curious custom. One might think that the Indians mean to frighten away, by their rattles, the evil spirits which impede success in an important enterprise, and in part it is no doubt so; but the chief idea seems to be another. The very movements, together with the »power» emanating from the magical instrument, are evidently believed to exert a direct, mysterious influence upon natural processes and even upon human thoughts and feelings. In other words, the effects seem to follow mainly on the principles of sympathetic magic. The same ideas, as we shall presently find, underlie the Indian dances in many cases.

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The *Tobas* call the ceremony of shaking the rattle gourd *poketá danyakkó*. It is the general way of expelling evil demons which move about at night, causing sickness, tempests, thunder-storms, etc. Conjurations directed against evil spirits operating in destructive hurricanes and tempests are particularly frequent. Since these usually begin at night, conjurations with the rattle gourd always take place at that time. One of the medicine-men places himself outside the houses and chants a monotonous chant accompanying himself with the rattle. In these chants as usual, no words are pronounced; they merely consist in the repeating of sounds like a—a—a—a . . . ha-ha-ha-ha, etc. The power lies in the voice itself. The chant is always begun in a loud voice which is heard far away; then the voice gradually dies down so that the last tones are only perceived as a low mumbling; finally one can only hear the dull sound of the rattle which the sorcerer goes on shaking uninterruptedly. After a while he starts again from the beginning in the same way as before, and so forth. This conjuration is not seldom continued with a prayer addressed to the »good spirit».

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Various important incidents in the social life of the Tobas, such as the birth of a child, the initiation of young girls at the time of puberty, and deaths, are celebrated with *poketá danyakkó* conjurations. The most important occasion on which the rattle and the drum are used is, however, among all tribes *the preparation of fermented drinks*.

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taking part in them, evidently with a view to propagating the useful plant spirits and giving them an opportunity to enter into the women and to be reborn in human form.[1])

I believe that in the Choroti dances performed during the algaroba season and the sexual licentiousness which forms part of them we have in fact remains of similar mysteries in the Chaco, which for one reason or another have partly lost their original significance, having now at the outset only the general character of joyful harvest festivals.

Again, the great festival dance of the Tobas is the *Nomi* already mentioned. It is performed on all particularly solemn occasions, but especially during the algaroba season. It is the great »carnival» dance of the Tobas. Even some time before the proper season begins the Indians start to dance, believing that by dancing they can accelerate the ripening of the fruits (*niapilák map*), just as the Mataco and the Choroti believe that they can hurry on the ripening of the fruits and the coming of the season by beating drums. In dancing the Indians arrange themselves in a long line, or so as to form a crescent. With arms interlaced round each other's waists they move, running alternately to the right and to the left and at the same time forwards to the other end of the dancing place where the chain is broken. Thereupon they move back in the same way. As is customary in the Chaco, the dancers themselves chant the measure of their steps in a loud voice. Similarly the women do not take part in the dance although they are allowed to be present as onlookers. — During the season the dance goes on daily and is believed to influence continually the growth of the fruits.

But the *Nomi* dance is performed during the algaroba season with another object in view also. The Tobas believe that at this happy and joyful time they receive invisible guests in great numbers. These are the *kadepakál* or *ilúh*, i.e. the spirits of departed Toba Indians, who also want to be present at the joyful festivals and to take part in the drinking-bouts. But these guests, who are feared or at any rate awake uncanny feelings in the living, are not welcome and do not receive any sort of cult. On the contrary, measures are taken to keep them off, and the Indians told me that precisely this is part of the object of the dance *Nomi*. The dancing men by means of their movements and their loud chanting prevent the spirits of the dead from approaching the villages or the place where the drinking and feasting goes on.

[1]) See my *Civilization of the South American Indians*, pp. 427 sqq.

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sible. I may add here that the Choroti men are in the habit of wearing round their neck a kind of flat whistle made of wood and ornamented with incised figures. With these whistles they produce shrill sounds from time to time during the dances, which are supposed to imitate the sounds of the spirits and have the power of frightening them away.

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How the Indians believe themselves to be able to influence even natural processes by imitating them, appears in an interesting way from the following curious ceremony which I witnessed among the Choroti. These Indians cultivate the maize only on a very limited scale, and it is among them a rare cereal. In a village the women had obtained some maize and were cooking it on the open place outside the huts. While the maize pots were boiling, the women sang in a loud, quavering, guttural voice, which it is impossible to describe exactly, an extremely monotonous chant, which was evidently meant to imitate the monotonous sound and the regular, bubbling movements of the water boiling in the pot. The women explained to me that *in this way the pot would boil well and the maize soon become soft.* The chanting was thus a means of »hurrying on» a natural process according to the same magical principles as we have noticed in several other cases.

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The *ear-tubes* which are worn as ornaments for instance by the Choroti. Ashluslay and Toba-Pilagá and which consist of wooden plugs or pieces of cane, sometimes of tremendous size, are likewise nothing but magical charms or amulets. This was clearly indicated by the Choroti, who told me that the ear-discs are worn to prevent the evil spirits, the *möhsek*, from penetrating into the ears. Their hugeness and peculiarity is evidently thought to act as a deterrent upon the spirits, and there seems to be the idea that the larger they are the more efficacious.

The Indians of the Pilcomayo use various kinds of *necklaces*, and it seems to be the rule that among the most primitive tribes, such as the Choroti and Ashluslay, they are more worn by men than by women, among the more civilized Tobas again more by women than by men. Speaking of the dress of the Choroti, I mentioned the large and costly kind of necklace consisting of snail's shells elaborately fashioned into small round buttons with a hole drilled in the centre and closely strung together. The necklace, called *lähslehuésle* in the Choroti language, is not only an ornament but at the same time a magical charm. The Choroti no doubt gave me the true explanation of their original significance when they told me that the necklace is a protection against sickness. The evil spirits, according to the idea of these Indians, preferably attach themselves to the throat or the chest, because catarrhs are very common in the Chaco during the dry season. The spirits are believed to enter into the body through the throat or the breast, but this is prevented by the protecting necklace. Hence, when a Choroti Indian sells his necklace or leaves off wearing it, his comrades say that he will most certainly soon fall ill. The same idea I found prevailing among the Mataco-Nocténes of Bolivia, where such ornaments are worn by both sexes. Thus the son of a chief, who was just at the age of puberty, one day appeared painted red in the face with *urucú*, and with a large necklace which covered the neck and the breast. When I asked the father why his son had put on these things, he answered: »It is in order that he may not fall ill». Both among the Mataco and the Choroti it is customary that children of both sexes go totally naked up to the age of eight to ten years, but nearly always they wear collars and facial paintings which most certainly are not »ornaments» in the civilized sense of the word.

Among the South American Indians in general it is a common custom to tie round a limb, for instance the wrist or the leg, a leather strap or some other kind of band, professedly with a view to making the arm or the leg strong. The Chaco Indians also commonly wear such ligatures

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number 3. He repeats his throw and throws for instance, 1 (*shuke*). Then he puts his arrow into number 4, and so forth. A continues until he throws 0, whereupon B begins and continues until he throws 0. B thenstarts from his »house» number 23, proceeding backwards. If a player passes the »river» (12) and enters a hole occupied by his opponent, he is entitled to throw out his opponent's »sheep». The object of the game is at first to throw out all the »sheep» of the opponent, the player passing from one end of the series of grooves to the other and back again. If a player succeeds in placing his marker (arrow) in a groove where his opponent happens to have his own marker, the latter is »killed» (thrown out) and has to start again from the beginning. Every player tries to throw out all the »sheep» of his opponent and at last his marker also. If he succeeds in doing so he has won. If someone during the game arrives at the »river» (*tauk*), he is »drowned», and if by the following throw he does not succeed in getting out, (that is, if he throws 0), he is obliged to go back to that groove situated nearest to his »house» where he has still a »sheep».

Gambling is always connected with the *shuke* game, and the stakes lost — whether it be a collar, a shirt, a pair of trousers or some other valuable object — are always scrupulously paid as real debts of honour. This is no doubt in part due to the fact, that the *shuke* game is not a hazard game in the ordinary sense of the word, but has a ceremonial significance. If the debts were not scrupulously paid, the game would fail to produce the effect which the Indians expect of it, namely, the increase of the edible fruits of the forest.

What struck me particularly with regard to the *shuke* game was the fact that, at any rate among the Choroti Indians, it is only played at a certain time of the year, more strictly speaking, in the month of March, when the rainy season on the Chaco ends and the dry season or »winter» begins. Then everyone began upon it at once. In all villages *shuke*-dice were carved and the game went on every day for many hours, sometimes from early morning till late in the evening. This very fact seemed to me to indicate that certain mysterious ideas were connected with the game. Besides, the game was played in a strikingly intensive, almost nervous tempo and the results of every cast — *tauva*, shuke, *kima* — were always shouted out in a very loud voice, which could be heard far away.

The Chorotis expressly declared to me that the *shuke* game is played only at the beginning of the »winter», when the algaroba (*Prosopis alba*) and other edible fruits of the forest grow scarce. At that time a period begins for the Chaco Indians when they usually have to struggle very

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hard for existence». Now the game is supposed to have the effect of *increasing the fruit and making the Indians rich*. This is made possible by virtue of the fact that *among the Indians there is always someone who wins*», from whose luck all will benefit. The Indians believe that just as they can influence the course of nature, »hurry on» the growth of the crops, by beating drums, dancing, and shaking rattles, so they believe that at this critical period they can enhance the vegetative power of the useful trees and prevent starving by playing *shuke*. It seems to me probable that in this game the magical effects are produced merely by the procedure of playing — by the feverish pace at which the game goes on, and so forth — just as technique and the very rhythm play an essential part in such magical ceremonies as dancing and the beating of drums.

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That the *shuke* game, so far as its principal features are concerned, has been borrowed by the Choroti from the mountain Indians, as has been suggested even by Nordenskiöld, is a matter beyond doubt and may be inferred from the playing terms themselves which are of Quichua origin (*shuke* = *chunca*, *tawra*, and probably *kima*). On the other hand, it is certain that the Incas never had an exactly similar game, and Nordenskiöld's imagination carries him too far when he tries to show that certain objects, found in archeological excavations on the mountain area of Ecuador, are nothing but counting-boards which have been used for a game more or less identical with the *shuke*. [1] Nordenskiöld's curious idea of connecting the said mysterious objects with the *shuke* game of the Chaco Indians entirely loses its importance in the face of the fact that, as I have shown elsewhere [2], the ancient Peruvian and Ecuadorian Indians had several »games of chance», none of which bore the slightest resemblance to the Chaco game just mentioned. The map published by the same ethnographer, showing the supposed distribution of »games of chance» in South America, was therefore decidedly prematurely drawn. [3] The particular character of the Chaco game has obviously, in

[1] See his article »Spieltische aus Peru und Ecuador», in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Heft 2 u. 3, 1918, p. 169.

[2] See my *Ceremonial Games of the South American Indians* (*Societas Scientiarum Fennica. Commentationes humanarum litterarum*. Helsingfors, 1930).

[3] Whereas Nordenskiöld erroneously assigns the neighbourhood of Quito in Ecuador as a region where a game like the *shuke* has been practised, he knows nothing of the games of chance I have myself discovered later in that country: the *huairu* game practised in the southern and eastern mountain regions, the *huairitu* and *singu* in vogue among the forest Indians on the rivers Bobonaza and Pastaza.